

LITERARY NOTES.

General Grant is writing for *The Century* a series of articles upon his battles. He is now said to be engaged upon a paper on Vicksburg.

Mr. Julian Hawthorne's work, now in the press of J. R. Osgood & Co., is to be entitled "Nathaniel Hawthorne and his Wife."

The same firm is preparing to bring out Mr. Henry James' "Tales of Three Cities," and also his father's work on "Spiritual Creation."

What authors, one may be permitted to wonder, are meant to be hit by *The Chicago Current* in this paragraph? It is astonishing that so many authors who have won deserved fame and success will do themselves and the public the grossest injustice by carelessness. They appear sublimely oblivious to the fact that no man can maintain the magic of his name save by continuously honest effort. The public readily detect the pot-boiler, and, when once they find their favor trifled with and their regard abused, are quick to resent the imposition. There are several authors who just now seem to be laboring under the impression that the public will accept anything that may come from their pens, whether good, indifferent, or bad, and this mistaken notion is causing them to utter the veriest rubbish. Such a course is sure to bring the revelation that there are too many authors clamoring at the doors of fame's temple to justify the maintenance of idlers and triflers within. The exits are wider than the entrances."

In criticizing two recently published volumes having Mr. Henry Irving for their subject, *The London Spectator* says that Mr. Irving introduces them as a "unique record," and adds: "Unless he is prepared to have them serve as his professional epitaph also, he will do well to see that they remain unique."

The same clever journal rather gets the better of Mr. Walter Besant when it says concerning "Dorothy Forster" that in his "new and delightful story, but few of the rules which he laid down in his recent 'Lecture on the Art of Fiction' are observed. The novel is none the worse for this; and we are willing to pardon the author's theories, provided that he always departs from them so much to our satisfaction as the present instance."

Mr. Edgar Fawcett's latest novel, "The Adventures of a Widow," is to be brought out shortly by J. R. Osgood & Co.

An Englishman who signs himself "Professor" writes to *The Pall Mall Gazette*: "I rather say Yes then No, and I am not much given to grumbling. If I am asked for my autograph I write it quickly, if for my photograph I send it unwillingly. If provincial reviewers ask for a copy of one of my books I forward it, if my friends want a testimonial I always try to say something that is both complimentary and true. If young authors send me a MS. I look at it, and in returning it try not to offend them. If young authors ask me questions I generally answer them. I often subscribe to books that cannot find a publisher, and contribute to societies which benefit their secretaries rather than society at large. I sometimes join complementary dinners, am civil to interviewers, and reply even to questions on hereditary genius without hoping for a prize. But look what we are coming to. Must I really answer these questions, whether I make skeletons and whether I derive my inspiration from coffee? I send you the inquisitorial paper which I am expected to answer. But please do not divulge my name, lest people might really take me for good-natured." And here follow the questions addressed to him: "At present I am engaged in collecting material for an interesting book, to be published under the name of 'The Methods of Authors.' As its title indicates, it will relate the mode or way of working of writers in all parts of the world. I trust that it will not only be interesting, but also useful to authors themselves. Please inform me of your own method. Do you prefer daytime or the night? Do you make a outline, a skeleton, of your work first? Do you use skeletons when at work, as wine, coffee, or tobacco? Have you any particular habit, when at work? How many hours a day do you spend at the writing desk? Did you ever force yourself to work when not having an inclination to do so? Please answer these questions, and communicate to me such other matters connected with the subject as you think of."

It is hard to see what useful purpose such a book as that proposed by this modest questioner can serve. It will pander to a vulgar and morbid curiosity on the part of the public; it will torture a number of sensitive writers whose private life and working hours ought certainly to be sacred to themselves; and it will put money in the purse of the questioner. Personal details of this sort are of no value, and no human being has a right to bombard an author with such questions.

Foggelby, on the Island of Møn, Denmark, the reported birthplace of Hamlet, is for sale by private treaty. On the hillside that forms part of the estate will be found the grave of King Foggo, who was the identical person by whom the young Prince to avenge the "most foul murder" of his father.

BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

BOSTON EVENTS, 1639 TO 1850. Compiled by Edward H. Savory, pp. 212. Boston: Tolman & White, 12mo, pp. 158. (John Wiley & Sons.)

COLLEGE GREEK COURSE IN ENGLISH. By William Clever Wilkes, Jr. \$10. pp. 302. (Phillips & Hunt.)

POEMS OF DANIEL GABRIEL ROSENTHAL. A New Edition. 12mo, pp. 204. (Thomas Y. Crowell & Co.)

LIFE OF JAMES G. BLAINE. By Charles W. Eliot. 12mo, pp. 300. (Houghton, Mifflin & Company.)

POETRY OF GREECE. By Rev. Alfred Rowley, D. D. \$10. pp. 472. (G. P. Putnam's Sons.)

THE MERCHANTIA STELLA. A. S. Ort Method of Acquiring Complete Fluency in Spanish. The Spanish Language. By Dr. Richard J. S. in 12mo. Fifteen Parts. 12mo, pp. 150. (Prestwich, 1884.)

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